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Mortality during month of December, 1903.

In comparison with the month of November, 1903, the sanitary conditions, as shown by the reports, suffer no notable alteration. The daily average mortality remained about the same, 48.19 as compared with 48.03. The number of deaths caused by plague diminished very considerably, being 52 as compared with 98. This was not true, however, in regard to variola, from which there were 131 deaths in November in comparison with 162 in December. Comparing the reports of the two months we see the following differences in the cases of the more important transmissible diseases: Yellow fever, 4 deaths in December as against 2 in November; plague, 52, with 98 in the preceding month; variola, 162 against 131; measles, 16 against 15; scarlet fever, none against 2; whooping cough, 2 against 4; diphtheria, 6 against 4; grippe, 33 against 28; enteric fever, 12 against 9; dysentery, 2 against 2; beriberi, 8 against 7; leprosy, 3 against 2; malarial fevers, 59 against 67 (this is worthy of note, as the same measures directed against the spread of yellow fever by mosquitoes act almost equally against the spread of malarial fevers), and tuberculosis, 286 in comparison with 247 in the month of November. —(*From report of Medical Demographer.*)

Disinfection.

At the central disinfection station there were reported during the month 236 cases of variola, 99 of plague, 5 of yellow fever, 5 of diphtheria, and 12 of tuberculosis, in comparison with the following number reported during the preceding month: 206 of variola, 264 of plague, 4 of yellow fever, 1 of diphtheria, 8 of measles, and 9 of tuberculosis.

Of the 99 notifications of the occurrence of plague, 72 cases were confirmed by bacteriological examination.

In December 4,616 disinfections were accomplished. In addition to these house disinfections, 2,989 articles of clothing were disinfected and 730 pieces of clothing burned.

The "mosquito brigade" cleansed 428 localities where there had been deaths from yellow fever during the last two epidemics of that disease, and destroyed 171 foci of larvæ and, in addition, isolated 1 case of this disease.

From the roofs of different houses 8,876 buckets of dirt were removed; from the interior of various houses 43 cartloads of dirt were carried away; and in the processes of cleansing adopted by the service more than 356 kilograms of pyrethrum were used, and more than 5,543 kilograms of sulphur, 384 liters of alcohol, and 52 liters of kerosene.

Thirty-eight thousand eight hundred and thirty-two domiciliary visits were made by delegations of health officials, of which 26,569 were made by the sanitary police and 12,263 by the ordinary police.

Inoculations against plague—Destruction of rats.

The number of inoculations against plague reached 649, and up to the last day of the month 24,441 rats had been destroyed. The gutters were disinfected for surface drainage in the areas occupied by the following streets: Tresca, D. Manoel, Sete de Setembro, Ouvidor, Rosario, Primeiro de Marco, Alfandega, Ajuda, Sao Jose, Santo

Antonio, Senador Dantes, Treze de Maio, Evaristo de Veiga, Santa Luzia, Uruguayama, Hospicio, Andradas, General Camara, Largos do Paio, Rocio, Carioca, Sao Francisco, and Capim.

Similar disinfections were done on board of vessels with a view to the destruction on board of rats.

Of patients isolated in the Paulo Candido Hospital during the month of December, 21 per cent died. There remained under treatment 49 cases of plague at the end of the month. During the month of December, 4 cases of yellow fever and 176 cases of variola were taken to the Sao Sebastiao Hospital. Of these, 2 of the yellow-fever cases died and 3 recovered. There was 1 case carried over from the preceding month, which accounts for 3 recoveries, and there were no cases in the hospital at the close of the month; while of the cases of variola 118 died, 63 recovered, and there were at the end of the month 96 cases still under treatment.

During the month of November there were under treatment at the hospitals of Paulo Candido and Sao Sebastiao 126 cases of plague and 100 cases of variola, together with 1 case of yellow fever.

The thermometer registered as its maximum 35.5° C. and as its lowest 21.3° C.

The above shows well the salient features of the statistical returns of deaths in Rio de Janeiro during the two months just passed. As stated in a previous report to the Bureau, the decrease in yellow-fever cases and deaths, and incidentally also in those of malarial fevers, shows that the disinfection services and the mosquito brigade also are doing good and efficient service—this also although the weather has been quite as warm as in preceding years.

CHINA.

Reports from Hongkong—Inspection of vessels—Sanitary conditions good.

Passed Assistant Surgeon McMullen reports, December 30, as follows:

During the week ended December 26, 1903, 9 vessels, with 837 crew and 461 passengers (248 cabin and 213 steerage) were inspected and granted bills of health; 672 crew and 196 steerage passengers were bathed and their baggage was disinfected; 34 aliens were recommended for rejection because of loathsome or dangerous contagious diseases. The health of the colony is now very good, and no communicable diseases were reported during the time covered by this report.

Report for the week ended January 2, 1904—Vessel fumigated to kill rats—Smallpox.

During the week ended January 2, 1904, 13 vessels with 1,046 crew and 307 passengers (197 cabin and 110 steerage) were inspected and granted bills of health; 817 crew and 93 steerage passengers were bathed and their baggage was disinfected—921 pieces. One vessel was fumigated with sulphur to kill rats. There were 17 aliens recommended to the steamship companies for rejection because of loathsome or dangerous contagious diseases.

One case of smallpox (European) was the only case of communicable disease reported for the week.